



June 7, 2010

**For Immediate Release**

Contact: Maureen Q. Wolyniec  
Director of Institutional Development  
860-443-5378, x213  
[maureen@theoneill.org](mailto:maureen@theoneill.org)

**NEWS FROM THE O'NEILL**

**EUGENE O'NEILL THEATER CENTER  
ANNOUNCES DIRECTORS FOR  
2010 NATIONAL PLAYWRIGHTS CONFERENCE**

***Lisa Peterson, Evan Cabnet, Seret Scott, Sheryl Kaller,  
Suzanne Agins, Steven Cosson, and Sean Daniels to Direct***

Waterford, Connecticut – Wendy C. Goldberg, Artistic Director of the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center's National Playwrights Conference, today announced the seven directors for plays previously selected for its 46<sup>th</sup> season.

**Lisa Peterson**, is returning to the O'Neill to direct ***Creation*** by **Kathryn Walat**; Peterson previously developed new work at Sundance Theater Lab, Playwrights Center, New Dramatists, and the Royal Court.

**Even Cabnet**, who has premiered shows across the country, including at Cherry Lane and Williamstown, will direct ***The Dream of the Burning Boy*** by **David West Read**.

**Seret Scott**, will direct ***Follow Me to Nellie's*** by **Dominique Morisseau**; Scott has directed a dozen plays at the Old Globe Theater as Associate Artist, and has directed at regional theaters across the country.

**Sheryl Kaller**, 2010 Tony Award Nominee for Best Director for Broadway's ***Next Fall***, will direct ***Close Up Space*** by **Molly Smith Metzler**.

**Suzanne Agins**, an adjunct Faculty Member in the program for Theater at Princeton University, will direct ***The Burden of Not Having a Tail*** by **Carrie Barrett**; Agins has directed at regional theaters across the country.

**Steve Cosson**, writer, director, and founding Artistic Director of The Civilians, and an alumni of the O'Neill's National Theater Institute, will direct ***A Devil at Noon*** by **Anne Washburn**.

**Sean Daniels**, who for four years has been the Associate Artistic Director for Actors Theater of Louisville, home of the Humana Festival of New American Plays, will direct ***Comes a Faery*** by **James McLindon**.

**The O'Neill**, which received the **2010 Regional Theater Tony Award**, founded in 1964 in honor of Eugene O'Neill, four-time Pulitzer Prize Winner and America's only playwright to win the Nobel Prize in Literature, is the country's preeminent organization dedicated to the development of new works and new voices for the American theater. The National Playwrights Conference is one of the O'Neill's cornerstone programs.

**Ms. Goldberg**, whose production of ***Dollhouse*** by **Rebecca Gilman** is currently running at The Guthrie, is in her sixth season as Artistic Director of the National Playwrights Conference. During her tenure, forty projects have been developed for the stage and gone on to great acclaim in New York and around the country, including a Susan Smith Blackburn Award Winner (**Julia Cho's *The Language Archive***), two American Theatre Critics Association Citation Award Winning Plays (**Lee Blessing's *Great Falls*** and **Deb Zoe Laufer's *End Days***) and the 2009 Pulitzer Prize Winner for Drama (**Lynn Nottage's *Ruined***), written in part during her residency at the O'Neill in the summer of 2006. In the 2007-2008 season, nine projects developed at NPC saw world premieres.

The National Playwrights Conference, running from July 9 to 31, is dedicated to exploring and developing new voices and works for the American Theater. Over the past 45 years, the Conference has been artistic home to August Wilson, Wendy Wasserstein, John Patrick Shanley, and many other emerging and renowned American playwrights.

In announcing directors for this year's National Playwrights Conference, Ms. Goldberg said: *"It's a pleasure to welcome new directors to the O'Neill, and alums Lisa Peterson, Steve Cosson and Sean Daniels back to work on these exciting, fresh and provocative new plays."*

Box office (860.443.1238) and online ticket sales ([www.theoneill.org](http://www.theoneill.org)) open Wednesday, June 9; advance ticket sales are currently available to O'Neill Members.

For further information on the National Playwrights Conference and scheduled public performances, email [theaterlives@theoneill.org](mailto:theaterlives@theoneill.org).

The Eugene O'Neill Theater Center has been home to more than 1,000 new works for the stage and 2,500 emerging artists. Scores of projects developed at the O'Neill have gone on to full production at other theaters around the world, including Broadway, Off-Broadway and major regional theaters.

In addition to the National Playwrights Conference, O'Neill programs include the National Music Theater Conference, National Critics Institute, National Puppetry Conference, Cabaret & Performance Conference, and National Theater Institute, which conducts

semester-long, intensive undergraduate theater training programs and Theatermakers, a six-week summer program. Credits are awarded for all NTI programs.

In addition, the O'Neill owns and operates Monte Cristo Cottage as a museum open to the public. Childhood summer home of Eugene O'Neill, the Cottage is a National Historic Landmark.

In addition to the 2010 Tony, the O'Neill received a special Tony Award for Theatrical Excellence in 1979, the National Opera Award, the Jujamcyn Award for Theatre Excellence, and the Arts and Business Council Encore Award. For more information, visit [www.theoneill.org](http://www.theoneill.org) or email [theaterlives@theoneill.org](mailto:theaterlives@theoneill.org).

## 2010 National Playwrights Conference Director Bios

### LISA PETERSON

Lisa Peterson has directed world premieres by Donald Margulies, Tony Kushner, Beth Henley, Naomi Wallace, Chay Yew, Luis Alfaro, Culture Clash, Jane Anderson, David Henry Hwang, Stephen Belber, Ellen McLaughlin, Marlane Meyer, Annie Weisman, Philip Gotanda, John Belluso, David Bucknam, Caryl Churchill, Janusz Glowacki, and many others at theaters including New York Theater Workshop, The Public, The Vineyard, MCC, MTC, Primary Stages, Guthrie, Actors Theater of Louisville, Arena Stage, Baltimore Center Stage, Hartford Stage, Long Wharf, Huntington, Yale Rep, Intiman, Berkeley Rep, Seattle Rep, and more. She was Associate Director at La Jolla Playhouse for 3 years and Resident Director at Mark Taper Forum for 10 years. Lisa has developed new work at Sundance Theater Lab, O'Neill Playwrights Festival, Playwrights Center, New Dramatists, and the Royal Court. Graduate of Yale College. Member of EST and the executive board of SDC.

### EVAN CABNET

Upcoming: Elizabeth Meriwether's *Oliver!* (Cherry Lane, world premiere). Credits include: Bekah Brunstetter's *Oohrah!* (Atlantic Theatre Company, world premiere), Mark Schultz's *The Gingerbread House* (stageFARM at the Rattlestick, world premiere), Donald Margulies' *Shipwrecked! An Entertainment* (Long Wharf Theater, East Coast premiere), Elizabeth Meriwether's *The Mistakes Madeline Made* (Naked Angels, world premiere), new plays by Adam Rapp, Schultz, and Meriwether as part of SPIN (Cherry Lane), Lewis Black and Rusty Magee's *The Czar of Rock and Roll* (Joe's Pub), his own adaptations of *Ubu Roi* and Salman Rushdie's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* (Williamstown), and the 2009 TFI Sloan staged readings for the Tribeca Film Festival.

He has developed new works by: Carly Mensch (Playwrights Horizons), Rajiv Joseph (Vineyard), Lucy Thurber (MCC), Molly Smith Metzler (MTC), Diana Fithian (Roundabout), Lauren Gunderson (NYU Grad), Cusi Cram (WET), Anna Ziegler (Cape Cod Theater Project), Annie Baker, Steven Levenson, Beau Willimon, Liz Flahive and many others. Five seasons at the Williamstown Theater Festival, including the 2003 Boris Sagal and 2002 Bill Foeller Fellowships. Recipient of the 2008 Claire Tow Award for Emerging Artists.

### SERET SCOTT

Seret Scott has directed a dozen production at the Old Globe Theatre as an Associate Artist . Off-Broadway she premiered **Mujeres Y Hombres** at New Victory Theatre, and directed **Birdie Blue** and **Zooman and the Sign** for Second Stage Theatre, **Yohen** for Pan Asian Rep. Regional credits, Arena Stage, Woolly Mammoth, Studio Theatre, Ford's Theatre, South Coast, Rep, Tribute Productions, Geva Theater, Studio Arena, ACT-SF, Long Wharf, Hartford Stage, Actor's Theatre- Louisville, Oregon Shakespeare, George Street, McCarter (outreach), Crossroads, Alliance, Indiana Rep, Alley, Philadelphia Theatre Co, National Black Theatre, New Mexico Rep, among many. She directed workshops for Roundabout Theatre, Pacific Playwright's, O'Neill Theatre Center, NY Stage and Film, Sundance, New Harmony and was a former Director in Residence-New Dramatists. Seret authored **Second Line**, produced by NJ's Passage Theatre and DC's Atlas Theatre and is a Drama Desk Award winning actress. Her directing nominations include, Beverly Hills' NAACP, Connecticut Critics Circle and Helen Hayes

### **SHERYL KALLER**

Sheryl Kaller most recently received a Tony Nomination for Best Director for the critically acclaimed Broadway production of **Next Fall** by Geoffrey Nauffts. **Next Fall**, which also received a Tony Nomination for Best Play, first played to rave reviews at the Peter Jay Sharp Theatre, produced by Naked Angels.

Ms. Kaller directed **Adrift in Macao**, a musical by Christopher Durang and Peter Melnick at Primary Stages, the Philadelphia Theatre Company and an early incarnation at New York Stage and Film. Other work includes **Dangerous Beauty** book by Jeannine Dominy, music by Michele Brouman, lyrics by Amanda McBroom (American Music Theater Project), **Jayson with a Y** (New Group), RAIN by Regina Taylor (New York Stage and Film-reading series) **Weird Romance** by Alan Menken & David Spencer (The York Theater/Mufti), **The New Americans** by Cindy Lou Johnson (A.C.T.—new works series), **THE TALK** by Frank Pugliese (Naked Angels), **How to Get to Where We're Going** by Theresa Rebeck (Naked Angels/Democracy Project), **The Fitting** by Frank Pugliese (Naked Angels/ Democracy Project) **The Hurdy Gurdy Man** by Dick Beebe (New York Stage & Film), **Oh, Figaro** (National Theater for the Deaf/National Tour 2003/2004), **Patter for a Floating Lady** by Steven Martin & Peter Melnick (Santa Barbara Ensemble), and **Next, Please** (Laurie Beechman Theater/ Dramalogue Award for Best New Musical).

Sheryl is the Co-Founder of Two Island Productions where she served as Artistic Director from 1994 until 2000. Two Island Productions is a New York and Bermuda-based theater company devoted to developing and producing original plays, playwright retreats/workshops, screenplays, concerts and youth arts and education programs.

### **SUZANNE AGINS**

Suzanne Agins recently directed the critically acclaimed world premiere of **Jailbait** by Deirdre O'Connor for the Cherry Lane Theatre. From 2005 to 2007 she served as Artistic Associate (New Plays) at Williamstown Theatre Festival, where she directed the World Premieres of Cusi Cram's **Lucy and the Conquest** and **Wing It**, a new musical by Gordon Cox and Kris Kukul, inspired by Aristophanes' **The Birds**. Ms. Agins has also developed new work by Lucy Thurber, Ken Weitzman, Sheila Callaghan, Dan

O'Brien, Matt Hoverman and others at venues such as Naked Angels, the Women's Project, Rattlestick Playwrights' Theater, the Cherry Lane Mentor Project, The Juilliard School, Summer Play Festival, and Soho Rep. She is the recipient of a 2006 Princess Grace Directing Fellowship (Robert & Gloria Houseman Theater Award), and holds an MFA in Directing from the University of California, San Diego, where she received the KPBS Patté Award for Outstanding Direction and two San Diego Playbill Awards for Outstanding Direction. Ms. Agins is also currently an adjunct faculty member in the Program in Theater at Princeton University, her alma mater.

### **STEVE COSSON**

Steve Cosson is the founding Artistic Director of The Civilians, and a free-lance director, directing new plays, musicals and classics. With The Civilians: co-writer and director of ***This Beautiful City*** which premiered to rave reviews at the Humana Festival and recently completed a critically-acclaimed run at Vineyard Theatre (Drama Desk, Drama-League, Lortel Nominations).

Previously produced at Center Theatre Group (Mark Taper Forum) and Studio Theatre in D.C. (Two Helen Hayes Nominations); co-writer and director of ***BROOKLYN: At Eye Level***, produced this past winter at Brooklyn's Lyceum Theatre; co-writer/director of ***Paris Commune*** produced in The Public Theater's PublicLAB series; writer/director of the long-running hit ***Gone Missing*** which has toured for several years throughout the U.S. and the U.K. culminating in a seven-month Off Broadway run at Barrow Street Theater (New York Times' Top 10 of 2007 list.) Writer/director (***I Am***) ***Nobody's Lunch***, which won the 2006 Fringe First award at Edinburgh and director of the company's first show ***Canard, Canard, Goose?***.

Additionally, he's directed The Civilians' work at A.R.T., Actors Theatre of Louisville, La Jolla Playhouse, HBO's Aspen Comedy Festival, The MoMA; London's Gate Theatre and Soho Theatre among many others. Cosson has directed and developed new plays at theaters including Hartford Stage, Soho Rep, O'Neill Conference, New Harmony Project and others. Plays include Neal Bell's ***Shadow of Himself***; Mat Smart's 13th of Paris; Elise Thoron and Jill Sobule's Prozak and the Platypus; Tommy Smith's ***Air Conditioning***; Anne Washburn's ***Communist Dracula Pageant***; world premiere of Peter Morris' ***Square Root of Minus One***; U.S. premiere of Martin Crimp's Attempts on Her Life; Peter Morris' Marge; U.S. premiere of Sarah Kane's ***Phaedra's Love***; World premiere of Erik Ehn's ***Tailings***; Eric Bogosian's ***Scenes from the New World***; and ***Stupid Kids*** by John C. Russell. Writer/director *Close to Shore* a community-based musical for the San Diego Rep. Director of ***The Time of Your Life*** (Williamstown); ***The Importance of Being Earnest*** (ACT); ***Serious Money and Guys and Dolls***, both at Carnegie Mellon; and ***Measure for Measure*** (SF Drama-Logue Award); Steven won an Obie in 2004 for the work of The Civilians.

He has been a Fulbright Scholar in Colombia, a MacDowell Fellow, twice participated in the Sundance Theatre Lab, and Resident Director at New Dramatists. His plays have been published by Oberon Books in the UK, Dramatists Play Service, and an anthology published by Playscripts Inc. He holds an MFA in directing from UC San Diego and a BA from Dartmouth College.

### **SEAN DANIELS**

Sean Daniels is in his 4th year as the Associate Artistic Director of Actors Theater of Louisville, home of the Humana Festival of New American Plays. He is the former Associate Artistic Director/Resident Director of the California Shakespeare Theater and before that spent a decade as the Artistic Director and Co-Founder of Dad's Garage Theater Company in Atlanta, Ga. He is also an Associate Artist of the Geva Theater Center in Rochester, NY. Has also directed for Cleveland Playhouse, Alliance Theater, Neo-Futurists, Crowded Fire and developed work with the O'Neill, Ars Nova, Playlabs, Bay Area Playwrights Festival, Magic Theater, Kennedy Center, and others. He has developed new plays with many delightful playwrights including: Greg Kotis, Peter Nachtrieb, Deborah Stein, Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa, Deb Laufer, Trey Parker & Matt Stone, Carly Mensch, Kristoffer Diaz, Jordan Harrison, Steve Yockey, & Lauren Gunderson.

###